WORKING AS A TEACHER IN AFRICA WILL ENRICH YOUR LIFE IN A NUMBER OF WAYS

VOLUNTEER!
Volunteering overseas has risen in the last decade - helping others will provide you with invaluable life skills.

REMOTE WORK

Working overseas isn't all about the cash, it will broaden your horizons.

NEWS **LEAVING BRITAIN**
Figures released from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show that there has been a 27 per cent increase in graduates finding their first job abroad since the start of the economic crisis in 2008.

There's an increasing number of opportunities for students to work abroad, and whether it's only for a couple of weeks or for a year or more, there's something for everyone. Work abroad offers students a wealth of benefits, from learning a new language, to making life-long friends; learning some new skills, to simply earning a bit of cash. Below are just some of the options available.

WORKAWAY

workaway.info is a website that offers an endless diversity of work-abroad opportunities, perfectly suited to students. The system is a simple one. Families, groups of people and small organisations – collectively known as 'hosts' – set up profiles that contain information about themselves, and information on what they need help with. Work is never advertised as paid, but instead is exchanged for food and accommodation. People can browse these profiles for free before signing up to the website. If they want to make contact with one of the hosts, they sign up for a small fee.

Once signed up, potential 'Workawayers' set up their own profiles for hosts to view. Workawayers may contact as many or as few hosts as they wish, and with over 5,000 hosts worldwide there's plenty to choose from! The diversity of opportunities is ▸

USEFUL WEBSITES

seasonworkers.com – Summer and ski jobs

bunac.org – Work abroad and volunteering

statravel.co.uk/work-and-learn.htm - Work abroad and TEFL info

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WORKING ABROAD WILL ENABLE YOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS TO DEVELOP

phenomenal; ranging from ranch work in Canada, to conservation work in Bolivia. What all opportunities offer is a level of cultural immersion that is not always possible when visiting places as a tourist. As such, it's a brilliant way to learn a new language. It requires a small leap of faith, but it pays off.

Sam Dyson, a Bristol student, worked on a small organic farm in the south of France for just over a month. "I can truly say that it was one of the best experiences I've ever had. Our hosts were great and they introduced us to the local community, making us feel very welcome. The work was at times hard – but it was worth it. Wherever I was, I was improving my French all the time and making new friends."

FACT BOX
What: Workaway
Where: Global
When: Anytime
How long: Two weeks to a year
Costs: Travel, pocket money
Provided: Accommodation and food
Website: workaway.info

TEFL

TEFL, short for Teaching English as a Foreign Language, is becoming a popular way for students to work abroad. More suited to those taking a year or two out from studies, after completing training students will be able to gain full-time, paid work teaching English to people in other countries. A degree is not needed; all that's required to qualify for a training course is a fluent level of spoken and written English. Training courses start at around £110, and go up to around £1,000. The difference in qualifications is not always crucial, especially if only planning to undertake teaching as a short-term experience, so it is worth browsing around to establish what is right for you. **Statravel.i-to-i.com** is a great place to start; it supplies information and offers various levels of training at student rates. Though TEFL does require a bit of investment to gain the necessary experience/qualification, this is considered worthwhile given that the work is paid. Like Workaway, it's a means to immerse yourself in another culture, interacting with it in a very personal way on a daily basis.

FACT BOX
What: TEFL
Where: Mostly Asia, but also elsewhere
When: Anytime
How long: Around a year
Costs: Training, travel, living costs
Provided: Salary
Website: statravel.i-to-i.com

CAMP AMERICA

Camp America has become a ubiquitous institution in the summers of many of our friends across the Atlantic, and in recent years this has also been the case for many UK students. It offers students the chance to work in one of around 1,000 American Summer Camps as an activity leader/counsellor, or as support staff. The camps consist of 6-16 year olds, who engage in activities such as adventuring, sports and arts. It is the job of most successful UK applicants to take care of the campers' general well-being, joining them in a vast array of activities that can range from abseiling to pottery. Others might have specific roles such as watersports activity leader, or head of drama. No matter what role you're assigned, however, you will be living camp life 100 per cent - sleeping, eating and socialising alongside the campers.

The minimum duration of a camp placement is nine weeks, and they typically run from June onwards. The application has a few stages, including an informal interview, and it is advisable to apply the autumn/winter before you wish to go. Camp America will sort out your visa, flights, travel, medical insurance and police check if you're successful. In total, the Camp America service costs just under £800, though much, if not all of this is made back in payment, or as they call it 'pocket money'. All accommodation and food is provided.

FACT BOX
What: Camp America
Where: USA
When: Summer, June-August
How long: 9 weeks+
Costs: Around £800
Provided: Accommodation, food, $600-$1200 'pocket money'
Website: campamerica.co.uk

VOLUNTEERING

For many there is no better way to spend summers off than helping others. Whether it's promoting sexual health, assisting in relief work or battling issues like climate change, there are a host of worthwhile activities that students can engage in.

Over the last decade there has been a notable growth in 'voluntourism' organisations. These organisations ask extortionate amounts of money from students in order to whisk them away for a couple of weeks to build a library that will inevitably fall down soon after they leave; or to engage in other useless activities.

For those who genuinely want to help, it can be a bewildering task filtering through all the organisations to find those who will enable them to make a difference to people's lives.

One route that we can recommend is the International Citizen Service (ICS). ICS is a government scheme that has brought together six of the UK's most effective volunteering charities in order to provide a worthwhile experience for both young people and those they seek to help. Placements typically last 12 weeks - enough time to make a difference - and they are available throughout the year. You are expected to contribute £800 towards your placement and alongside the government investment, this covers flights, food, accommodation and other costs. ■

FACT BOX
What: International Citizen Service
Where: Global
When: Variable
How long: 12 Weeks
Costs: £800
Provided: Travel, living costs, insurance
Website: ics-uk.org.uk

PHOTO: iStockphoto